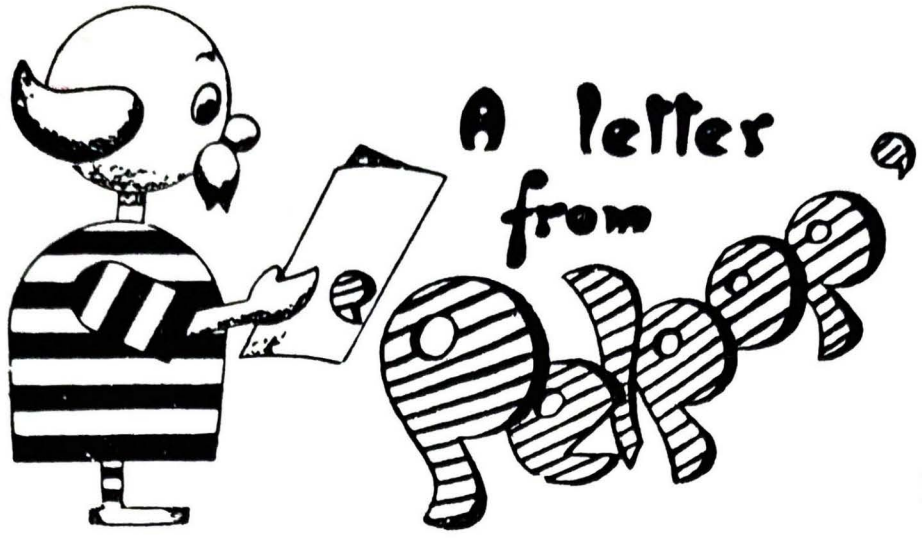
PELPUP NEWS

WINTER EDITION 1973 Number 26

Produced by PELPOP

Pelham PUPPETS

Marlborough, Wiltshire



The
Pelpup Club

PELHAM PUPPETS
MARLBOROUGH
Wiltshire
Telephone - 442

MARLBOROUGH,
December, 1973.

Dear Pelpups,

May I wish you all a Happy Christmas and may the New Year bring warmth and peace and common sense to us all.

The prize winners in the play competition are Mark Chester for "Red Riding Hood's Christmas Adventure" and Eric Proksh, U.S.A. for "The Magic Caterpillar".

In the photographic competition the winners are Cheryl Eberwein, U.S.A., Ann Doggrell and Simon Grigg.

I am giving one puppet to each winner—would you each please write and say which puppet you would like (ventriloquial puppets excluded I am afraid).

Some members complain when they do not receive their prizes, saying they had mentioned in their play which puppet they wanted, and so did not ask again. *Please Note*—I ignore all such requests. The correct procedure is to ask for the character you want after you see your play, photograph or whatever the competition is about, has been printed. Your choice may have changed by then.

I must explain to American members that the new rate of $1 for a year's subscription does not include their magazine being posted by air mail—only correspondence and catalogues. To send the magazine by air mail would cost 73 cents each time which is $1.46 for the year. Then there is the cost of the two magazines which the $1 subscription barely covers any way, so you see, they must go by sea mail.

Everyone please note that I am discontinuing the five year subscription. It is far better to renew yearly as an indication that your interest has not flagged. It will also reduce the need for so many changes of address and magazines being returned "Not Known". Also there is the question of cost mounting all the time and in this day and age it is unwise to look several years ahead when fixing prices. The present five year subscriptions will of course be honoured.

For the next magazine Summer 1974 there will be another cartoon competition. It proved very popular but remember you must draw your picture in black ink so it can be reproduced if it is a winner. Certainly Mr. Davidge's cartoon in No. 24 started off some interest. Those that I have received during this period will be held over for judging in May.

We have put a rubber stamp on the back of your magazine envelopes, where appropriate, reminding you that your subscription is due. As this was started a month or so ago it is possible that you have paid in the meantime, in which case please ignore.

I am going to feature a series called "Going Round the Puppet Factory" and Frank Lawton will conduct you. We will start in the Moulding Room and gradually work right through the factory.

I am making a request for used stamps for Christchurch Priory—the only stamps not required are our ordinary daily stamps we put on inland letters. They want any used overseas stamps and any of the English commemorative stamps, those large pretty stamps. Just cut round the stamp and when you have filled a large envelope send them to me. I will allocate six puppet kits to send to the best six collections (one to each). It will of course be easier for the overseas members because any of their used stamps will be acceptable.

What makes a person a good puppeteer? I have had to teach so many demonstrators how to handle our puppets and I can usually tell in a very short time whether they are going to become proficient at manipulating the strings. It is a sort of co-ordination they have between their minds and their hands, they have a clearly separate channel to each hand so the mind can tell one hand what to do and send a totally different message to the other. In some people these communication channels are crossed so one message confuses the other, a command to one hand effects the other one too. Here is how to tell if you are going to make a good puppeteer—put one hand on top of your head and the other on your tummy, tell the hand on your head to pat it and the one on your tummy to rub it, in a clockwise motion. Now tell them to reverse the movement, i.e. tummy one pat, head one rub, as though trying to remove the halo from your head—of course you have got one! Now tell your tummy hand to go to your head and head one to go to your tummy and carry out the same sequence of commands, reversing direction and movement. I bet one hand will want to do what the other one is doing, if not you are in full command of each hand and you should make a good puppeteer.

Good luck,

Peter Pop

CUT ALONG DOTTED LINE

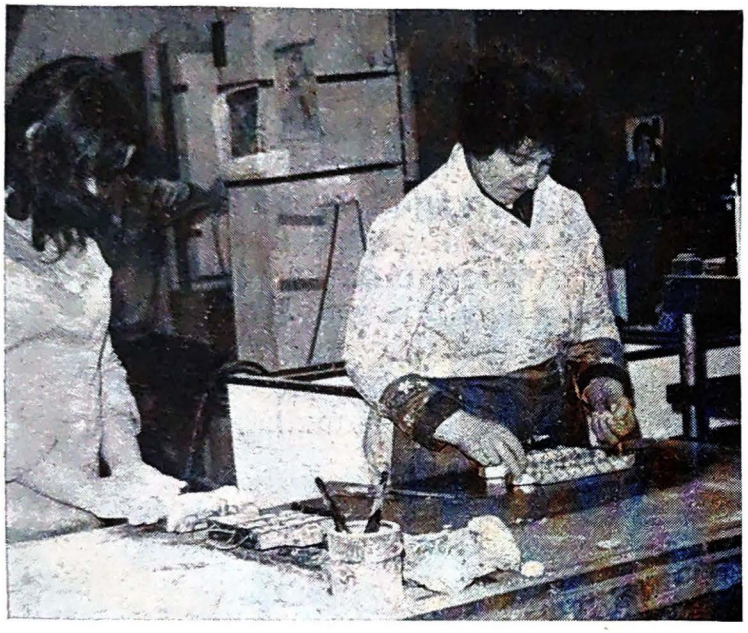
PLEASE SEND MY NEXT MAGAZINE I ENCLOSE P.O. FOR **15p** **for 1 year's subscription**	NAME ..... ADDRESS ....
Date	

Moulding

by FRANK LAWTON

Moulding. As many of you will know, some of our heads are round wooden balls, but we also have a process for moulding shapes which cannot be made from wood. The first picture shows Ron filling up a hollow metal mould from a heated tank, using a "sugar tap". This is a special tap which will not get clogged up when sticky materials are used, and gets its name from the fact that in another industry it is used for pouring hot sugar.

The mould is made from aluminium alloy, usually in two fitted halves and is chilled by placing on a bath of ice, which is behind Ron in the picture.



The material is a mixture of gelatine (which is very much the same as the table jelly you eat—but doesn't taste as nice!) and pumice powder. Pumice is one of the kinds of rock which is blown out of a volcano when it is active, and our supply comes from Italy. However, it cannot be mined until it has matured for 3000 years. When Ron has filled his mould, he immediately up-ends it on the rack above the tank, where you can see two moulds, in order to empty out the spare mixture. This leaves a thin layer of mixture on the inside of the mould, which is then returned to the ice. There will be up to forty moulds in use at any time so that from the placing of the mould on the ice to the time of taking out the mould or "cast" may be up to ten minutes. This is plenty of time for the cast to become hard enough to handle. It is placed in a tray and the trays are put in the

For the benefit of new members, the subscription of 15p entitles you to a badge and a year's subscription to the magazine—i.e., two magazines, one on joining, that is the current copy, and the next issue. They come out in Aug./Sept. and December. If you do not renew you are still a member but you will not receive a magazine.

If on receiving this magazine it is your second copy and you want to continue receiving magazines please renew your subscription on this form as soon as possible.

Subscription for U.S.A. and Canada :—

1 year $1

Please pay by International Money Order or Cash if more convenient.

drying cupboards, which you can see (with numbers) at the back of the picture. There the casts stay for twenty-four hours, drying in a current of air provided by two big fans; then the hollow casts are ready to go on to the next process, which will be described in a later issue.

In the second picture, Rosita and Mrs. Hands are making pressings of puppet feet. This process produces a solid cast and is useful for hands, feet and Skeletons, all of which have to be heavy. The materials used are similar to the ones described above, but are not so fine. Thus, we use ordinary pellet glue, and not gelatine, and this is "filled" with an ordinary white mineral powder, as opposed to expensive pumice powder. The warm mixture is made into a dough, which you can see being placed in a flat-sided mould. After Rosita has filled the bottom half of the mould she will place the top half on it and Mrs. Hands will press it, using the press (on the right of the picture) which exerts a pressure of 1000 lbs. per sq. inch. The mould is then put on the ice-bath (back of picture) to cool and is then opened and the contents taken out and put in racks for drying. As the pieces are solid they will take up to ten days to dry properly.

Machine Room

In the **Machine Room** there are a number of woodworking machines, including four circular saws, two bench drills, a double-headed sander and some special drills which will drill several holes at a time. All these machines are connected with an extraction system which collects the saw-dust, and a local butcher takes it away to use in his shop.

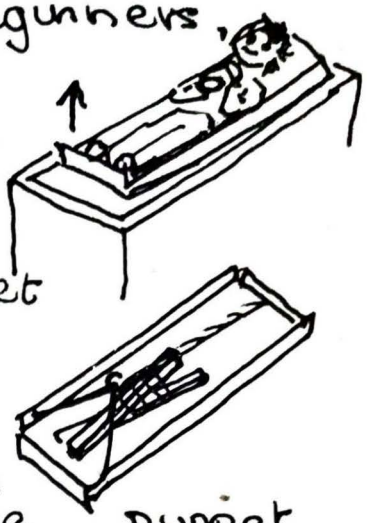
The bodies are made of Parana Pine, a timber which is hard and "clean", that is, free of knots. Top bodies are cut four at a time in 2″ pieces from lengths of timber measuring $1\frac{3}{4}$″ x $\frac{3}{4}$″, and lower bodies from 1″ x $\frac{3}{4}$″ timber, in $1\frac{3}{4}$″ lengths. These lower bodies are then slotted with a special wide saw to allow for the insertion of the legs.

All these parts are put in a large wooden barrel or "tumbler" which is rotated so that they knock against each other and the side of the barrel and are cleaned off and smoothed. Next, the parts are put into jigs for drilling. These jigs ensure that all holes are drilled in exactly the right spot. In the picture Iris is using the circular saw and the jig in which body blocks are placed to ensure operators are safe from damage. In the background of the picture Mrs. Smith and Pam are drilling bodies.

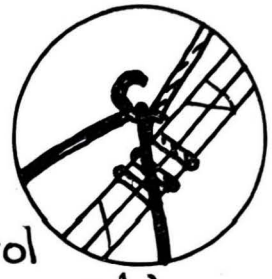
The last picture shows the Assembly Room, so called because it is in here that all the body parts from the machine room are put together to make up the required number of bodies. Peg Stroud and Edna Locke work out from the programme how many of each character are required. The only difference at this stage is the colour of their boots, with the exception of course of Mac-Boozle's brightly checked legs and heavy boots (as we call them) for Gepettos, Pirates and Hansels.

GETTING TO KNOW YOUR PUPPET

This page is obviously for beginners. First learn to take your puppet out of the box correctly & of course to put it back correctly. The puppet is strapped to a platform, & held in position by an elastic band. Pull the puppet out of the box by taking hold of the flap at the end of the platform by his feet. Turn it over with your thumb on the control & fingers supporting the puppet, unhook elastic band from control hook.



Now draw the puppet away from the platform, while it is hanging from the control — never handle the puppet itself. Let the puppet unspin & at the same time roll control over & over. Open the control & draw the hand strings (usually red) out so the puppet stops spinning immediately it has finished, otherwise it tends to spin up the other way.

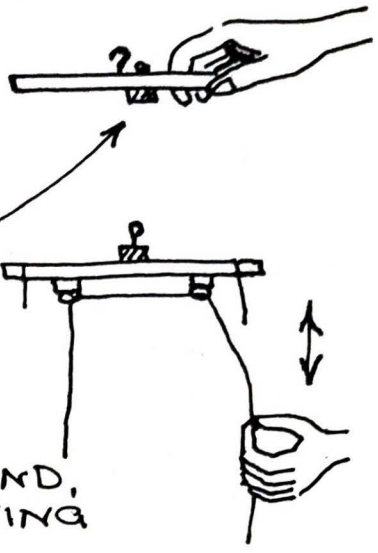


NOW THE PUPPET IS READY TO PERFORM I will let you into a secret — he is rather vain — he loves standing infront of a mirror. This is fine because it helps you. Tilt it back a little, so you get a full face view of your puppet.

FOR PUTTING PUPPET BACK – NOTE detail drawing in circle showing twisted "rope" of string coming from <u>under</u> hook & open side of hook faces upwards, so that the elastic band can hook into it.

NOW FOR WORKING IT

THIS PAGE IS ALSO FOR BEGINNERS – BUT EVEN IF YOU ARE NOT ONE — IT MAY HELP YOU. The hand that holds the control is, I think, the most important one & does the most work, so I suggest you hold the control in your right hand — that is, if you are right handed. Though, I need hardly say it, if you are left handed, hold it in your left hand. Hold control so by back bar & make sure it is fully opened i.e. at right angles.



THE FIRST & MOST IMPORTANT JOB FOR THIS HAND IS TO KEEP THE PUPPETS FEET ON THE GROUND, PARTICULARLY WHEN IT IS WALKING OR DANCING.

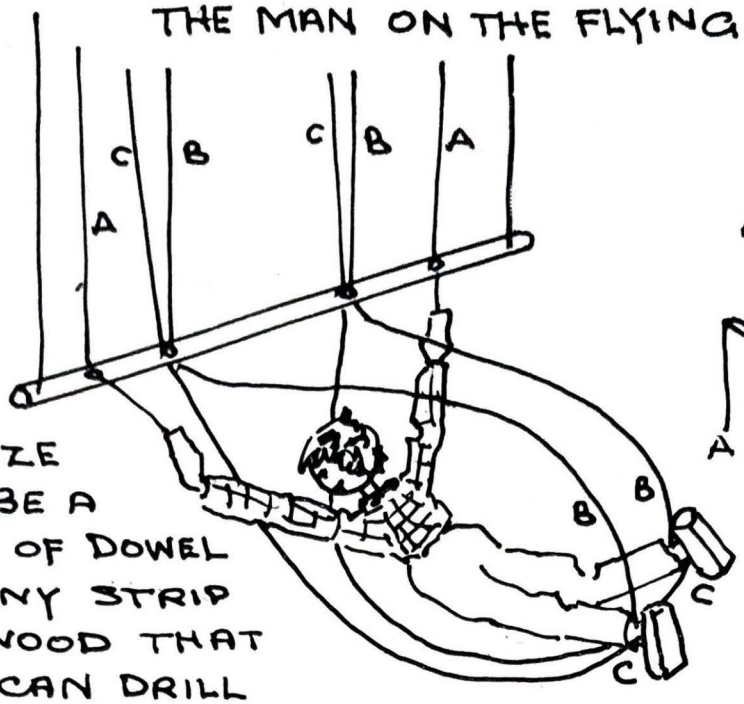
The next task this hand performs is to provide the rythm when the puppet walks or dances. Some of you may be surprised that I suggest rythm is required when walking a puppet — but it is, as you will see later. Your right hand also controls head & body movement. This is terribly important when the puppet is talking & of course, when he bows. The right hand also does the steering, the lifting & the lowering.

YOUR LEFT HAND OPERATES THE HAND STRINGS, THE LEG STRINGS & THE BACK STRING.

Take left leg string about 4" down from control. Grip firmly, pull up & slowly down, first the left leg comes up, then the right. Sometimes the right leg does not come up enough, that is because you have not pulled your left hand down enough. Now back to your right hand, it must keep the control up at this moment, so the left leg of the puppet is only just on the ground.

NOW BOUNCE THE CONTROL EACH TIME YOU LIFT A LEG STRING & EACH TIME YOU PULL DOWN: SO IT IS UP BOUNCE, DOWN BOUNCE, UP BOUNCE & SO ON. FOR WALKING LESS BOUNCE BUT MOVE CONTROL FORWARD.

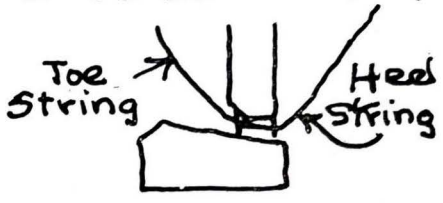
THE MAN ON THE FLYING TRAPEZE



THE TRAPEZE CAN BE A PIECE OF DOWEL OR ANY STRIP OF WOOD THAT YOU CAN DRILL SIX HOLES THROUGH [WITHOUT SPLITTING]

Attach three short bars to front of control on about 8" of thread.

AN ORDINARY STANDARD PUPPET CAN BE USED. REMOVE THE HAND & KNEE STRINGS.

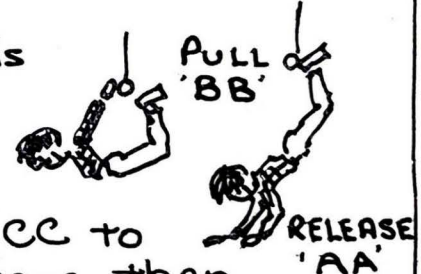


WRAP ONCE ROUND JOINT & TIE & CONTINUE, SO THAT C TO B IS ONE LONG STRING.

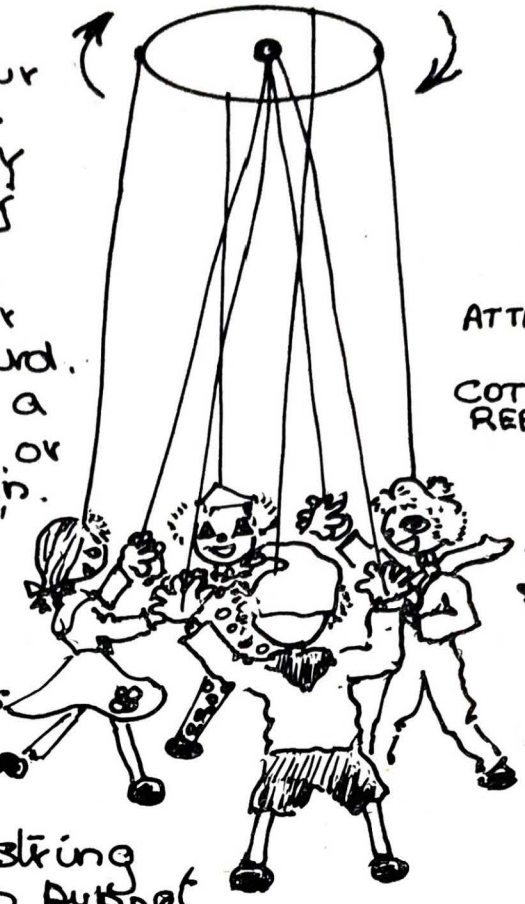
Attach strings To his hands heels & toes, see diagram → These pass through holes in Trapeze (you could use screweyes) & are then attached to their respective bars — hand strings to bar 'AA', heel strings to bar BB & toe strings to bar CC.

By raising bar AA his hands will be drawn up to the Trapeze. This should be just above his reach, so he must spring up to it — making several attempts. His weight is now taken on this bar (AA), by pulling on it, you will soon make him swing.

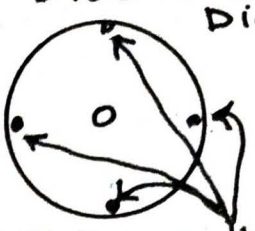
Now draw up bar 'BB', this will raise his heels to the trapeze, when in position release 'AA' & he will swing on trapeze from his heels. In the same way you can pull up bar CC to draw his toes to the Trapeze then release AA & he swings from his feet. Rock control to shake his head.



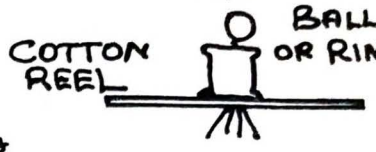
An Idea for your Stage



Disc 5" To 6" Diam.



ATTACH PUPPETS HERE



ONE STRING FROM EACH PAIR OF HANDS GOES THRO' CENTRE OF DISC & IS TIED TO BALL OR RING.

You require four small Jumpettes Boy, Girl, Noddy & Clown or Andy Pandy.

You need to cut a disc of ply or strong cardboard. You might have a circular box lid or lid of a biscuit tin. Make a hole thro' centre of disc & fix cotton reel to upper side with glue & tacks. Holes must coincide. Smooth the edges of holes.

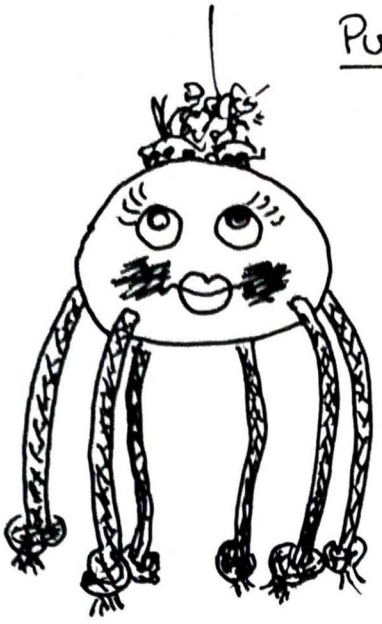
Now take the string & elastic off each puppet & attach long string to each head & tie to the four holes on perimetre of disc. Make sure all four puppets feet touch the ground equally. You could tie 6 puppets to disc but it would need to be larger in diam.

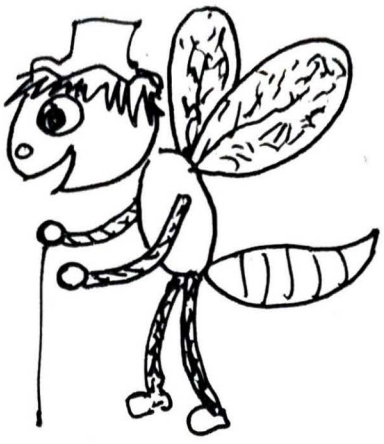
Now pass string thro' one right hand & next puppets left hand. Pass all four strings up through hole in centre of disc & tie to ball or ring which sits on top of cotton reel. In this position all hands are at lowest, when ball or ring is pulled up all hands come up.

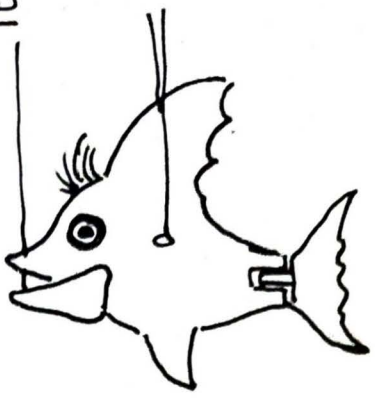
Turn disc slowly at first, bouncing it to the music (hold the cotton reel) & raise & lower ball

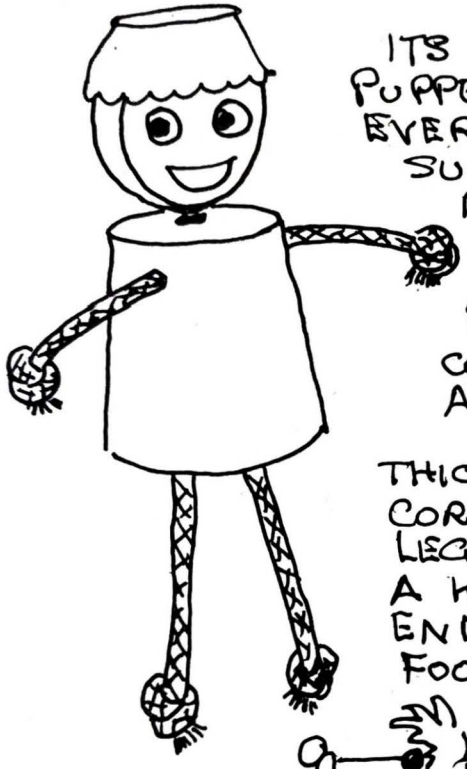
Anyone who buys our puppets can use them on a stage in an amateur or professional capacity without our permission. The reason for the Condition of Sale on the boxes is to prevent a firm from using them in animated units and coin-operated machines.

PUPPET SKETCH PAD



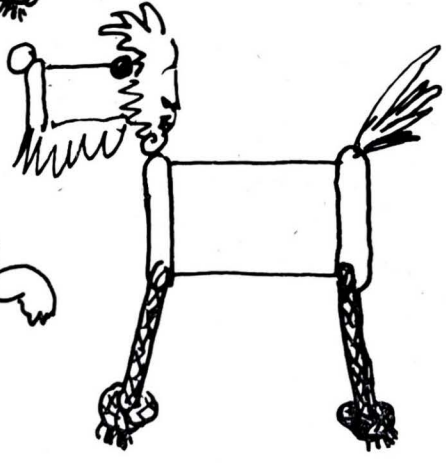


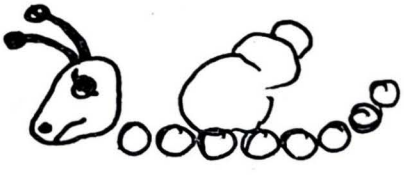




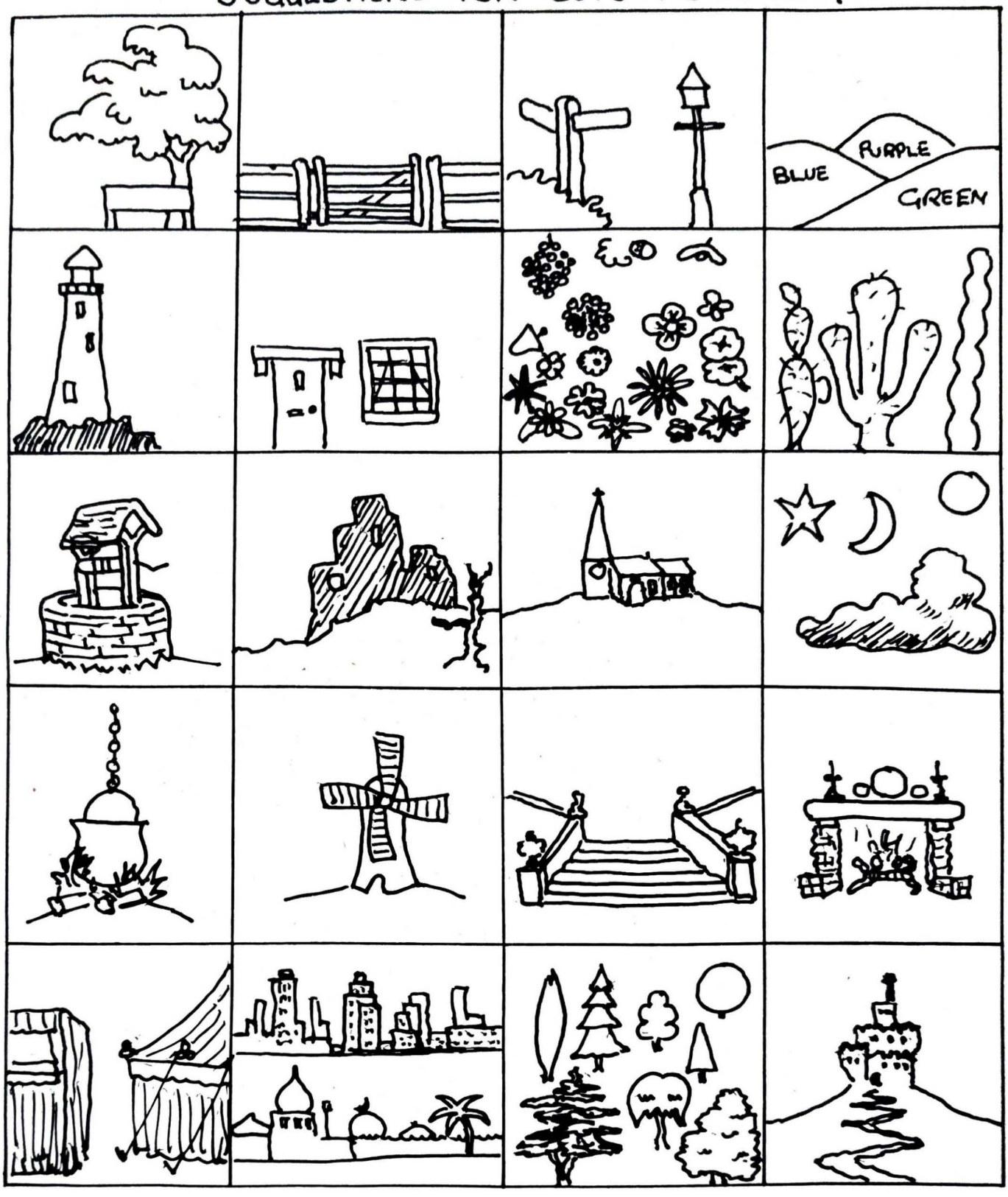
ITS FUN MAKING PUPPETS OUT OF ODD EVERYDAY THINGS SUCH AS COTTON REELS, YOGHURT POTS, POTATOES, WALNUTS, PLASTIC BOTTLE TOPS & CONTAINERS OF ALL SORTS

THICK SOFT BRAIDED CORD MAKES GOOD LEGS & ARMS, A KNOT AT THE END SERVES AS A FOOT OR A HAND.





SUGGESTIONS FOR CUTOUT SCENERY



Cut out scenery looks very effective when painted in bright colours and placed against a black velvet background. Fluorescent paint can be used if you have an ultra violet lamp.

Red Riding Hood's Christmas Adventure

By MARK CHESTER, Sutton Coldfield.

Scene I. Red Riding Hood's house. (*Lights dim. Enter Father Christmas*).

FATHER C. Hello children. Do you know who I am? Did you know that only children who believe in me can see me? Tonight I am rather sad because I have found one little girl who does not believe in me. Her name is Red Riding Hood, and I'm afraid I will not be able to take her any presents. I am going to have one more try to persuade her that I am real and I need your help.

When Red Riding Hood comes in I want you to tell her I'm there. Will you do that for me? (*Lights fade*).

Scene II. Red Riding Hood's house. (*Red Riding Hood is sitting on a chair. Enter Father Christmas*).

RED RIDING HOOD: It will be Christmas tomorrow and everyone tells me Father Christmas will be coming to bring the children presents. But I don't believe in him, do you? Well I have never seen him and you can't believe in someone you have never seen, can you?

(*Enter Father C. He stands in front of R.R.H. and waves his hands*).

FATHER C.: Hello. Oh dear, she still can't see me. Tell her I'm here. (*Children reply*).

RED RIDING HOOD:What did you say children?

(*Children shout again*).

RED RIDING HOOD: Oh don't be so silly, you are imagining things.

FATHER C.: Oh well, she still does not believe in me, but I'll stay because I have a funny feeling she may need my help. (*Father C. exits and the cat enters*).

CAT: Miaow. Hello, I have come to tell you that I think your Granny is ill. Every day she leaves me a saucer of milk but today there is none. Will you go and see her?

RED RIDING HOOD: I must go at once. I will take her some flowers and some food.

Scene Three: A dark wood.

(*Enter R.R.H.*).

RED RIDING HOOD: They do say that when it is dark the wood is haunted but I'm not afraid. If I do see anyone I will just turn my back until they go away. (*Enter Giant*).

GIANT: BOO!

RED RIDING HOOD: Don't try to frighten me, you silly giant, I'm not afraid. I'll just turn my back until you go away. You're not real anyway.

GIANT: Not afraid? Not afraid? How dare she say I'm not spooky. You believe I'm spooky, don't you children? You watch me. I'll scare her so much that she'll shake like a jelly.

(*The Giant shouts, yells, screams and jumps etc; until he is exhausted. He then bangs his head with shame because he cannot frighten Red Riding Hood*).

GIANT: Oh dear me, dear me. I've failed, I've failed. How can I ever show my face again in the spooky wood. (*Giant exits*). (*Enter Father Christmas*).

FATHER C.: You see children she does not believe in anything. I am very much afraid that she will never believe in me, but I'll stay a little longer because I still believe she may need my help. (*Father C. exits*).

(*R.R.H. continues her journey through the woods when the skeleton enters*).

RED RIDING HOOD: Oh no, not another silly spook. (*Skeleton rattles his bones*). Don't rattle your bones at me you ridiculous skeleton, you don't scare me. I'll just turn my back until you go away. (*The skeleton begins to do a dance to any piece of selected music. Towards the end of the record the skeleton dances slower and slower until he falls to the ground in a heap*).

RED RIDING HOOD: There I knew it was not real. It's just a big pile of helpless bones. (*Enter Father Christmas*).

FATHER C.: She still does not believe in anything. I ought to be going to pack the toys up, but I'll wait a little longer. (*Father Christmas exits left and the wolf enters right of stage.*)

RED RIDING HOOD: Oh, what a lovely dog you are. Come and let me stroke you.

WOLF (*To children*): Little does she know I'm the big bad wolf, but don't tell her will you? (*The wolf nuzzles up to Red Riding Hood*).

WOLF: Wuff Wuff. What have you got in your basket, Red Riding Hood?

RED RIDING HOOD: I have lots of goodies for my Granny who is ill.

WOLF: Can you give me some, I'm very hungry.

RED RIDING HOOD: I am sorry dog, but my mother told me not to give any away because Granny will need it all. (*Red Riding Hood exits right, the wolf says to the children):*

WOLF: By the time I have got to her Granny's house she will not need any food. I'll shut her Granny in the cupboard and let her die there. Then when Red Riding Hood comes I will take her food and eat it, and afterwards I'll eat Red Riding Hood herself. (*The wolf exits right, chuckling*).

Scene Four: The bedroom of Red Riding Hood's Grandma. (*The Grandma is nowhere to be seen. The wolf is sitting in a bed when Red Riding Hood enters left*).

RED RIDING HOOD: Hello Grannie. Oh dear, you don't look very well. You must have been very ill, you seem to look different today. What big ears you have.

WOLF: All the better to hear you with my child.

RED RIDING HOOD: And I don't want to be rude, but what large eyes you have.

WOLF: All the better to see you with my child.

RED RIDING HOOD: And I can't help noticing what enormous teeth you have.

WOLF: All the better to eat you with my child.

(*The wolf growls and rushes towards Red Riding Hood. Red Riding Hood faints. Enter Father Christmas, left*).

FATHER C. (*Shouting*): Get out. Get out, you dreadful animal. Father Christmas is not afraid of you. (*Wolf rushes off left, yelping. Grandma enters right*).

GRANDMA: Father Christmas, I have not seen you since I was a tiny little girl. Thank you so much for saving my life, I'm afraid Red Riding Hood has fainted. I must go and make some tea for her.

FATHER C.: I will stay to look after her. I have an idea that she will be very surprised to see me when she wakes up. (*To children*). Do you think she will believe in me now that I have saved her life? (*Grandma exits as Red Riding Hood wakes up*).

RED RIDING HOOD. Hello. Who are you?

FATHER C.: I am Father Christmas.

RED RIDING HOOD. Father Christmas. I did not believe there was such a person as Father Christmas, but I can see you so you must be real.

FATHER C.: I am real alright and to prove it I shall pay a visit to your house tonight and leave some presents at the bottom of the tree. Goodbye until then, and a Happy Christmas.

Scene Five. The scene is set in Red Riding Hood's house. In the middle of the stage is a decorated Christ-

mas Tree surrounded by presents and parcels. Red Riding Hood is standing by the tree, facing the audience. Her parents are standing nearby.

RED RIDING HOOD: Father Christmas really did come last night and look at all the presents he bought me. I'll never doubt him again. I hope you have all written to him this year to tell him what you want for Christmas, but remember, if you don't believe in him you will have no presents. Merry Christmas everyone.

Characters: RED RIDING HOOD, HER PARENTS, FATHER CHRISTMAS, WOLF, GIANT, CAT, GRANDMA and SKELETON.

NOTE: If the play is too long then the acts in the haunted wood can be omitted.

The Magic Caterpillar

By ERIC PROKSH, Texas, U.S.A.

Characters: KING, CATERPILLAR, DOG, WITCH.

Scene: King's garden. Scene opens with the caterpillar crawling across the stage.

CATERPILLAR: What a beautiful garden; (*hesitating sadly*) I wish I could live here. Maybe the king likes caterpillars. Caterpillar! Caterpillar! I hate that word!!! I've been a caterpillar for three years. All my friends have flown off. I should have made enough silk by now to spin a cacoon. (*Sigh*).

(*Dog enters*)

DOG: What nice fresh air! I sure feel tired though. After all, I've been hunting all day with the king. He found the fox alright, but he decided he wanted a bigger chase so he let it go and then after a while he went after it. Lost it completely. What a dope! Hey, who are you? (*Turns to caterpillar*).

CATERPILLAR: I'm a caterpillar. Do you know if the king likes caterpillars?

DOG: He hates anything that harms his plants.

CATERPILLAR: I wouldn't touch a leaf of any of these plants. I could earn money and pay my way here. (*He twitches his tail and a coin drops. A coin drops every time he twitches his tail*).

DOG: What could you do? Say, where did that gold coin come from?

CATERPILLAR: I could eat harmful bugs that might do harm to the king's garden. (*Twitch Ping*).

DOG: Wait a minute, twitch your tail for me.

CATERPILLAR: It's just a habit, but if you insist. (*Twitch ping*).

DOG: That's beautiful!

CATERPILLAR: What?

DOG: Haven't you noticed every time you twitch your tail you produce a gold coin?

You are sure to win the king's approval.

CATERPILLAR: That's the best news I've heard all day. I sure would hate eating bugs.

DOG: Here comes the king now!

(*Enter king*).

KING: Hallo Mut! How are you? Good! What is that worm?

DOG: If you would shut up long enough, blabbermouth, I would have told you.

CATERPILLAR: Never mind. I will do the introductions. First of all I'm a caterpillar, and whenever I twitch my tail a gold coin falls. (*He twitches his tail and a gold coin falls*).

KING: That's fantastic. From now on you are the royal caterpillar. You can keep half of what you produce and you can have the best cottage at court.

CATERPILLAR: Thank you, but I like it right here in the garden.

KING: Alright, if you want. Good day dog and caterpillar. I need to catch up on my reading. (*King exits*).

CATERPILLAR: Since we're going to be good friends and because we will be seeing a lot of each other we might as well know each other's first names. My name is Charley. What's yours?

DOG: My name is Arffus, but call me Arff for short. What's that noise.

CATERPILLAR: I don't know.

DOG: It's the witch!!! (*Dog hides and the Witch enters*).

CATERPILLAR: Witch? There's no such thing. (*Looks at Witch and shreiks*).

WITCH: Come here you cute little worm. I know all about you. Come along with me or I will put a spell on the king and your dog friend.

CATERPILLAR: Alright. But I'm only doing it for Arff and Kingy.

(*They exit but Dog follows them across the stage secretly*).

CURTAIN CLOSES

ACT II

Scene: The Witches cave; stage is dark.

OPEN CURTAIN

CATERPILLAR: What a terrible life. I'm condemned to! I have to twitch my tail all day! I can't produce tin foil I'm so sad, though. (*He twitches but nothing happens*).

(*Enter Witch*).

WITCH: You lazy caterpillar, you haven't made one coin! You need a beating!

CATERPILLAR: I'm sorry, Witchie, but I can't make a single coin when I feel like this so sad and all.

WITCH: Nonsense. You need a beating.

(*Dog enters*).

DOG: I've come to rescue you! (*Dog bites Witch and Witch falls*).

CATERPILLAR: Thanks dog. But I didn't know dog bites were fatal, Arff.

DOG: They aren't as soon as she wakes up she'll be the king's slave until she decides to be a good witch. As soon as her broom is taken away, she's powerless.

Pelpups Write

DEBBIE KLESENSKI (age 14).—I enjoyed receiving your letter, requesting a few words regarding our puppetry class at Bill Bairds Studio, 59 Barrow Street here in New York City, this past summer.

First, we were given molds (head molds). To make the head, we tore small celastic strips (celastic is sized canvas sold by the yard at David Hamburger at 136 west 31st Street here in NYC. This was dipped in MEK (Methyl, Ethyl, Keytone) solution and completely covered the head by overlapping each piece and smoothing edges to blend especially at rounded areas.

Mr. Bill Baird, personally, gave us a sculpture demonstration on making a head mold.

After the heads were completely dried and taken off the mold, we patched the holes we missed with putty, then dried and sanded, shellaced, more putty, sanded again until smooth.

When head was smooth and dry we painted face with flesh tone. I mixed red, white and a little brown, to get a pinkish flesh tone. Mouth was red. Halves or quarters of ping pong balls were used for eyes. Pupils were made of felt and blue painted behind eye area.

For arms and legs we used tubes of muslin stuffed with kopok or cotton. I used lambs wool. (Muslin was sewn up to make tubes. I stitched arm ends before stuffing. For hands I used old white gloves with one finger cut off and the other ones made smaller. They can be made of muslin, leather, or whatever. For shoes I used leather, weighted and stuffed.

Shoulders were made from a pre-cut oval piece of wood with arms; nailed to sides. Chest was a block of wood, small round one, with four strips of muslin attached from shoulders. This round piece was attached to another oval stuffed piece for hips. (see illustration). This hip piece was stuffed with kopak and glued down tightly with muslin and a few tacks were used. (Our instructor was Fania Sullivan).

Then next is really a lot of fun. . . you dress him and attach the strings under supervision of Sully (Frank Sullivan). Mine was a teenager (Hippie). Others made theirs into a Monk, Professor, Wizard, Grandma, Intern, etc.

Mr. Bill Baird let us work some of his puppets on his professional stage and observed professional puppeteers such as Albrecht Roser, Peter Baird, Frank Sullivan, Olga Felgemacher, John O. Malley, Byron Whiting and others.

DAVID LEECH

17, Priory Road, Stone, Staffs. ST15 8NS.

Thanks to the invitation of Mr. Pelham (Pelpop), I have an opportunity to relate to readers of PELPUP NEWS some of my experiences and most successful acts while presenting marionette performances.

I hope some of the ideas can be used by other PELPUPS.

Perhaps a brief outline of our activities then more on the performances and puppets later, would be the most beneficial way of conveying these ideas.

I began performing with my puppets when I was about nine years old, but at this time, 1963, I only gave shows to my younger friends. Two years later, I heard, quite by chance, of a boy who also shared my hobby and we decided to group our puppets together and produce shows at my home for the local children.

It was in the summer of 1966 that my partner, David Brookes, and I, decided to branch out a little with our theatre. We were invited to local church fetes and schools in and around our home town of Stone. Such activities continued until September 1967, when we were able to accept invitations to Christmas parties at the schools and local play groups.

By the Christmas of 1967, two other friends, Martyn Heaney and Geoffrey Eldershaw offered to assist me with my work. Shortly after, a friend over from Malta, Howard Read, also joined our group.

We opened in 1968, the way we had planned to in 1967, with a television performance. Howard Read and I appeared in The Tingha & Tucker Talent Theatre, and our performance gained us third prize. The following three years were the busiest years I had until that time, and during the years of 1966 (October) to 1971 (January), I have a record of nearly five hundred performances!

In 1971, I let the marionettes have a rest, while I concentrated on my school work (for "O" levels). Since the beginning of that year (1971), I have produced three performances.

I cut down on the number of performances in that year for various reasons. One being that in 1972, I would begin studying for my "A" levels, with a view to becoming a schoolteacher. This way, I could still incorporate my hobby with my work. But something else happened in 1972 that caused me to cancel all these plans.

In the April of '72, I received a letter from a very keen PELPUP, Andy Currie of Quebec, Canada. His request was for more information on producing and presenting marionette shows. The result has been that after eighteen months of writing to each other—we prepared and produced a performance together; since I left school before taking my "A" levels, so that I could earn enough money to make the journey to Canada.

The performance was held at another friend's home, in Andy's home town of Lachute. The show itself was very straight-forward and not too long. With an audience of about seventy (adults and children), the result was very reasonable. But this performance was unique in it's production—at least as far as any of my productions go, inasmuch as we started from nothing in the way of materials or puppets and that the whole presentation was written, prepared and produced within three weeks! (The majority of my performances take at least six to eight weeks to produce—and that is when we have the necessary materials and, I might add puppets!)

Well, everything fell into place like a perfect jigsaw puzzle. Andy and myself constructed the marionettes—something Andy had never before attempted—and two older friends, Mrs. Marie Reid and Donna Paterson made the costumes. Mrs. Reid's son, Bob, supplied us with music and sound, and two younger friends, Lita and Monica Melin assisted with the manipulation of the puppets, and with another younger friend, Kristen Jolly, provided the necessary dialogue. (It was fortunate that only female voices were required for the main part of the performance). Soon, everyone was working hard, although I found working in humid temperatures of high eighties, a bit of a strain—something we English aren't used to—everything was ready just on time though.

We presented the performance on the evening of September 2nd much to the delight of the audience—many who had never even seen a puppet-show before (except for T.V.). I must add, that I was very pleased with our younger friends, Monica and Lita Melin who translated the whole script into French for us. Certainly a time to remember, and all as a result of my name and address appearing in PELPUP NEWS 22.

Well, what do we perform in our theatres? First of all there are a lot of cabaret acts, animal stories, (I once performed a ninety-minute version of Kenneth Graham's "The Wind in the Willows", probably better known as Toad of Toad Hall), and of course, fairy tales and fantasy. To enrich the variety, effort has been made in producing historical shows and space-travel, (mainly for educational purposes) which are generally the most interesting and elaborate performances.

Characters are just as varied; in appearance as well as in construction, from kitchen utensils to forty-stringed, four feet tall, marionettes (including a dragon—over five feet long, including tale).

Scenery, generally 'big, bold and simple' and, of course, colourful. Elaborate settings are made spacious to allow plenty of room on the playing-boards for the marionettes.

The ideas in PELPUP NEWS 23 page 19 are very good as they produce very effective settings, and give the 'theatrical look' that is good for puppets, (it keeps us well into the puppet THEATRE and away from these televised 'mechanical dolls, "Oh look at the life-like settings, mother!"that is often called 'puppetry'. Any way, the theatre is far more attractive).

And talking of theatres, well ours have always followed the basic design for marionette theatres, with larger marionettes, the 'open style' type stage—as I have described in PELPUP NEWS 22 on page 10. (Simply a screen to hide your puppets with while not in use; with a few props in front for you to use with your puppet).

Having outlined the course of events that deal with my puppets, perhaps a few words on certain shows and characters that I've used in the past will prove helpful to others that might like to use or elaborate on.

The most successful puppets that I've ever made I think, are the "Diddy Men". (Ken Dodd's Diddy Friends from Knotty Ash). They are still very popular and, (as far as puppets go), they weren't very difficult to make. I made sure to leave plenty of air in their trousers with feet to weight and balance, as this gave them 'superb, tattifalious bounce.' (That's how one local newspaper once described them when they first saw my performance). This act was very popular with my theatre and soon my friends were calling me "Diddy Dave". Perhaps some Pelham puppets could be converted—just give them a protruding tum, baggy trousers—sealed at the ankles and the waist, and a large hat resting on the nose almost concealing their eyes—and there we are. 'A couple of Diddy Men always succeed in making any Ticklemas Eve tattifalarious and leave your audience full of discomknokkerated gertitude.' (Perhaps you could obtain permission from Roger Stevenson and the B.B.C. to produce these characters as Pelham Puppets).

For those who saw the Grand Turk illustrated in Pelpup News a few years ago; this isn't really too complicated to make—if one follows the instructions properly from the magazine. I elaborated on this just a little—and in one way—made it simpler. Instead of the limbs turning inside out to form a child with one string—I had a whole 'pop-group'. The head of the Grand Turk remains the same, but this produces a female singer with a 'maxi-dress'. The body contained a small platform for the drums for our drummer to use. Again this puppet is a fairly large one.

The majority of PELPUPS using PELHAM PUPPETS, perhaps a few ideas in this line might be of use. For those who cannot afford a whole pop group—why not have a 'one man band'? Generally the Dutch Boy is good for this—or any similar puppet, just rig him up with a simple guitar, a drum and cymbals on his back and a harmonica, a suitable setting—and we're away! Again, for those who can't obtain the more expensive SL Type pop singers, four sailors go down really well as a pop group.

Many Pelpups choose variety shows as performances. With this type of show, it is good to 'keep the show moving' (even when the curtains are closed). By that, I mean, try not to have long changes—if you do—have an act with a puppet in front of the stage. What always makes a variety show interesting, is to have a one-act play—only a short one. If you can't make one up yourself, re-enact a simple scene from a film you've seen. For example, The Mad Hatter's Tea-Party from Alice in Wonderland. You don't have to have the exact puppets. I used the SM Type Clown (with the 10/6d—or should it now be 52½p?—price tag on his hat), the baby dragon and the poodle. Any girl puppet would do for Alice. Just use the scene from the film as a basis, not necessarily an exact copy of it. 'A Spoonful of Sugar' from Mary Poppins, an interesting scene from 'The Sound of Music'; well, in fact, any scene from almost any film that you feel would go down well.

If you're short on ideas for plays—although you shouldn't be, as there are always some very good plays in PELPUP NEWS as a basis for a good play. Perhaps you could do what we did for our last performance, entitled, 'Everything is Beautiful' and that was to select a short story, written by (in this case, a twelve year old girl), or any friend's 'essay' or story written in school. Perhaps you could ask your school teacher to have an 'essay competition' and the most suitable essay could be used as a basis for your play. A warning: it can be difficult to successfully adapt a story of this kind into a play. If the play is narrated—by just having the essay or story read—with sound effects and music, make certain there is plenty of action. The same applies to Bible Stories. (David Kossoff retells some of these very well in his book—obtainable at most good bookstalls.) But I can't over-emphasise the point to have plenty of ACTION with narrated shows. Good movement/manipulation and effective scenery are usually beneficial in this case as well.

In PELPUP NEWS 24, you have a 'transformation puppet'. A similar idea I used a few years ago was something I saw on the Black and White Minstrel Show. To have two puppets in one. Instead of a 'back' just have another 'front'. Put a face on the 'back' of a head and be certain the limbs are all jointed to bend both ways. Of course, it requires twice as many strings, but I have done it with some PELHAM PUPPETS—just remove the yellow back string. Also, as far as possible use opposite colours for 'the other half'—with appropriate music and dance scene—this is very effective.

'People puppets' illustrated in another PELPUP NEWS, gave me another idea. Well it's still a people puppets—but a wire-frame body on strings. Use wood for the hands and feet, as this aids balance and movement to the body. The body of this puppet should be about two feet from neck to toe—with your assistant's head on top of course.

A few 'funny pieces' that can be used with PELHAM PUPPETS, two characters hanging from the 'ceiling' at the front of the stage, with only half of the body showing, i.e. head and shoulders,

as they are upside-down, hold the control in the normal manner, and have hold of the puppets' feet. They can discuss the 'peculiar looking' audience and how funny THEY look sitting 'upside-down'. Also, a puppet climbs up a ladder to the top of the theatre, when the ladder is taken away —leaving only his legs showing. Kick them up and down (as with walking). Both these may seem very simple—they are, and if not over-done, also very amusing.

What do you do when something goes wrong? If you find you have a performance that's a little slow-moving and you sense an air of boredom in the audience—just sit the cowboy on Dougal and ride them over the playboards from one side of the stage to the other, to the music of 'Galloping Home' by The London String Chorale (or some western riding music). Even if it's completely 'out of place' to do this—if it makes them laugh—do it. But not too often.

If a puppet becomes tangled on stage—well this depends to a certain extent on the type of performance that you're presenting. The first thing NOT to do is panic or try to put it right 'unnoticed'. Leave it and follow through as best you can. If it doesn't alter the style of your performance too much—the puppet can always make a complaint to the operator whilst on stage. The puppeteer can briefly argue and then the puppet exits for his operation—which, we hope, will only be brief. It might be an idea to have a short 'just in case something goes wrong, while we're waiting to put it right' prepared act handy—at every performance—just in case. (Things can go wrong, but don't worry or become upset we learn by mistakes very often. The thing is: prepare and practice).

At the time of writing, I am directing the preparation of another performance. Several ideas that I've not yet used I hope, I will be putting into practice and just a couple of 'oldie' acts of five or six years ago will be used as well. This will be a variety show, and probably the most ambitious performance I've until now, produced. I'm making a complete new troupe of puppets as well as using PELHAM PUPPETS, and constructing a theatre to 'fit the show', instead of the show for the theatre. I hope to do the performance in early March (1974) so, we've still plenty of work to do.

To conclude, I would like to say, that I've found puppetry is a combination of many pleasant arts and crafts, with plenty of scope for use of the imagination. As with all work done with the hands, I also found it to be a completely fascinating and absorbing occupation. In fact, sometimes, I believe the puppets have had me on the strings! Perhaps it would be better to change that word 'occupation' to hobby, if one starts to get the idea that 'one day I'm going pro.' you may find all too often that you'll be disappointed. Don't be discouraged by this, Eric Brammel once said that if you WANT to be a puppeteer—you MIGHT be. Keeping puppetry as an hobby isn't so unexciting as it sounds. Speaking for myself only, my marionette strings have, I'm pleased and somewhat proud to say, taken me to the television screen once and even across to Canada to do a show with a very good friend and PELPUP. Aside from that, many, many people have enjoyed my efforts—they've laughed, (even cried), they've been happy—*that's* the main thing.

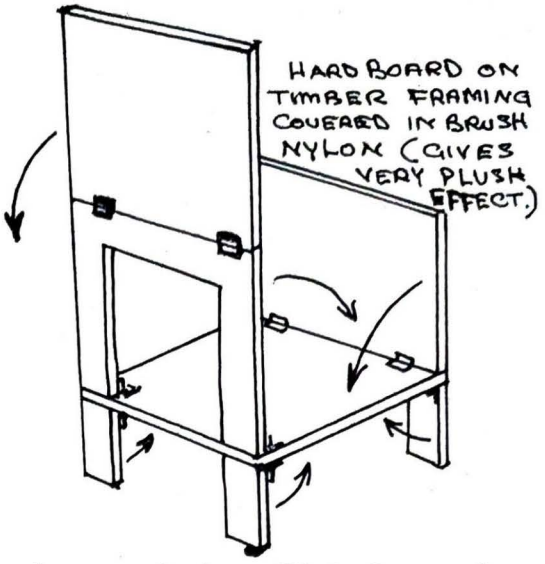
If you really want to consider professional activities—see some. Eric Brammell of the Harlequin Theatre and Jan Bussel with the Hogarth Puppet Theatre are two that can be seen in England from time to time. But I always recall talking to a professional actor—who had an interest in puppets—when he went to apply to join a theatrical company, the director gave him a piece of advice first. He said, "I must perform my duty first. Get lost, you're mad!". Then he answered his questions.

DAVID LEECH, November 1973

P.S. If any PELPUPS would like illustrations of some of the marionettes I've written about—I will be pleased to send them (in a S.A.E.). I would be pleased to hear from any Pelpups that wish to write to me. (S.A.E. with the initial letter please).

MARTIN ISLES.—Actually the last few months have been quiet as I have just finished my final examinations at Brunel University, have gained my degree and am now planning to stay a further three years doing research. You may recall when I last visited the factory just over a year ago, I brought along my friend David who was also interested in puppets, and with his carpentry skills

(he has previously constructed sets for theatrical productions) we built a new portable theatre which folds up neatly into a box about 24 x 36 x 6" which conveniently fits into the back of an 1100 car, which at the time we both had. However, I have since changed mine for an Escort, and the intrusion of the prop shaft means the stage has to go on the roof! The following sketch should show how it folds. The legs fold into the floor, the back folds on to the floor, then the floor folds into the front where the curtains are and finally the top folds down. We have fitted a couple of lights which slot into place at the join of the top half to the curtain section, i.e. just above bottom of proscenium and also have a U.V. light which fits into the trough at the front of the stage and produces some marvellous effects with the Skeleton and Griselda, the wicked witch. The Red Devil is good too with glowing red eyes—I also brushed some red paint on the end of his fiery trident which gives an excellent flickering effect as he waves it about. We had a very busy Christmas season and the summer was also busy with a number of fetes that we attended. In fact we did 61 shows from April to the end of the year and a further dozen in January/early February, before having to cut back because of Dave's exams and then mine. However, we are now preparing to start the coming Christmas Season, in fact we have three shows booked up already, one as far forward as January, which was in fact booked a year in advance for a children's birthday party.



HELEN GILES.—Carol Carey and I have a puppet theatre called "The Sunflower Theatre" and we both have quite a lot of puppets between us, hers are not Pelham Puppets though. I have fourteen puppets now. We are due to build a new theatre in the Christmas holidays. It will be a larger one than the present one, 50 x 20 x 34", quite big for us. We have only done one show at a party but we already have bookings for next year. We have done a lot of others for our families, from which we got donations, some of which we spent on a scrap-book. We have now nearly filled it with photos, programmes and accounts of shows. We tape all our plays on either Carol's tape recorder or mine and it is very helpful as we do not have to talk as well as perform.

CAROL CAREY.—Both Helen and I have a Pelham ventriloquial puppet. We often use these for part of our show.

MARY STEEDEN.—Our club, The Marionette Club, which was described by my friend, Jane Cope, in the last magazine, has been fairly busy this year. Last Autumn we did a play for our Church Bazaar. Then, in the term we were allowed an afternoon off school to entertain a local Infant's School. Our latest effort was a show at the School Fete. We raised £2.72.

PAUL BATE, 86 Hill Street, Essington, Wolverhampton.—I would like to tell you how simple it is to record a whole play on tape and also record sound effects on them and then all you have to do when doing a play is work the puppets. Also I find when practising a play the best way to do it is to get a large mirror and put it in front of the stage and then you can pick out anything wrong while looking in the mirror. I have a friend across the road who is also a member of the Pelpup Club, his name is Paul Clifton and he has five puppets and I have eleven so that when we get together we have sixteen of your puppets. Would you please ask Pelpups living in my area to contact me.

DAVID LEECH, 17 Priory Road, Stone, Staffs.—Due to the success of my marionette performance last April and performing a similar show in August, I've decided to plan and prepare another performance, which I hope to present sometime in February or March (1974). Of course, I'll be starting from scratch, and the show will be a 'straight-forward variety show' using Pelham Puppets and home-made ones. As with the performance last April, two friends, Andrew Frid and Eunice Tabenor will be assisting me and so will my younger brother, Terry. (He usually finds himself roped into my performances, eventually). I must say that with this, and the above-mentioned performances, I've found that it's a real pleasure to have someone who really have a keen interest in presenting marionette shows. Having done over five hundred performances—many of them single-handed, in five years (1966-1971), this really makes puppetry more a pleasure. And, of course, there are many advantages working co-operatively with a group; more ideas, more elaborate presentations and a theatre, (working alone, I used the 'open-style stage'—PELPUP

NEWS No. 22, page 10—or no theatre at all). Of course, all types of presentations have their advantages and disadvantages.

JOHN TALBOT.—I have been a member of the club for about 5 years now, but last year I formed a Puppetry Society at my school, Christ Hospital at Horsham. Although the Society is new I have our history.

The first production that I wrote and produced was in the summer of 1970, this was called the Green Dragon. At this time I had only six puppets to use; they were, the witch, baby dragon, old man, cat, caterpillar and a mini pup reindeer. The show only involved three people. The same play was done at my friends Sale that same summer.

The next was the following year and was called The Old Man and the Wizard. This play only needed 4 puppets and involved 9 people.

The next summer was the biggest show we have done, The Return of King Woggin. There were 8 scenes, 14 puppets and 12 people involved.

The first show of the Christs Hospital Puppetry Society was this summer and was called Rupert to the Rescue. During the interval we use the pop group to one of the latest hit records. This went down very well and had the audience rocking in their seats. The play used 10 puppets and involved 15 people. The show raised £17 for the Society and the school appeal.

T. SCREECH.—Recently my father went to France, and he visited the Museum of puppets at Lyons. This Museum has been displaying puppets since 1950 and it is still being enlarged. The puppet Museum is one of the most beautiful buildings in the old town of Lyons; It is adjoined to the 'Musée Historique de Lyon' (The History Museum of Lyons). There are five rooms displaying puppets. The first room contains Lyonese puppets and the three hand puppets Guignol, Gnafron, and Madenons sculpted by Laurent Mourguet whose portrait is hanging in the same room. The second room contains puppets from Belgium, Holland, and France, and coloured shadow puppets from the Karageuz theatre in Turkey. The third has puppets from the G.Sand Theatre at Nohant, France; also 19th century travelling-theatre puppets. The fourth room has hand puppets from the theatre of Paris. The penultimate room has puppets from the Far East numbering among these are: Wayang Golek and Wayang Kulit from Java; also various shadows from Thailand and Cambodia.

The last room has a very rich collection of puppets given by Mister Léppold Dor. In this room can be seen Venetian Puppets from the 18th century and some Russian puppets.

I. H. MCWALTER.—When I was on holiday in Austria I went to the famous marionette theatre in Salzburg. In the foyer there are glass cases with some of the old puppets in them. The theatre was formed in 1913 by Anton Aicher the sculptor. His first production was of the little opera 'Bastien and Bastienne'. The puppets of the title characters are preserved in one of the glass cases. Sixty years later the company is performing dramatic operas by Mozart using many special effects.

The voices for the puppets are recorded by famous singers and the music by famous orchestras.

The company is now headed by Prof. Herman Aicher, his wife Friedl and daughter Gretl.

The puppeteers are Greda Vogl, Bertl Sperrer, Werner Durnberger, Mathias Michel, Andy Jerfy.

Over the years the puppets have ranged in size from seven inches tall to thirty inches tall.

The show I saw was W. A. Mozart's 'The Magic Flute'.

SELENA PARKES, Laurel Cottage, Silver Street, S. Petherton, Som., would like to contact Pelpups living in her area, and would also like a pen friend—hobbies swimming, riding, animals, butterfly collecting.

The following is a List of Members who would like Pen Friends:—

KENNY COLLINS, Box 55, Mulberry Kan., 66756, U.S.A., from anywhere in the World, boys aged 10-13, hobbies electronics and music.

SHARON ELLIS, 5 St. Catherines, Lincoln, a boy or girl from anywhere in the World, aged 11, hobbies reading and writing.

MAXIME AUSTIN, 215 Moorland Avenue, Lake View, Lincoln, a girl from France aged 11/12, hobbies gymnastics and sport.

JILL MILLER, 31 Gilcomstoun Land, Aberdeen, Scotland, a boy from the U.S.A., aged 14-15, hobbies pop-dancing, swimming and ice skating.

HAZEL FORBES, 39 Gilcomstoun Land, Aberdeen, Scotland, a boy from the British Isles, aged 14-15, hobbies pop-dancing, swimming and ice skating.

AMANDA ELMS, 475 London Road, South Lowestoft, Suffolk, a girl from California, aged 10-12, hobbies gymnastics, ballet and tap dancing, swimming, animals, music and puppetry.

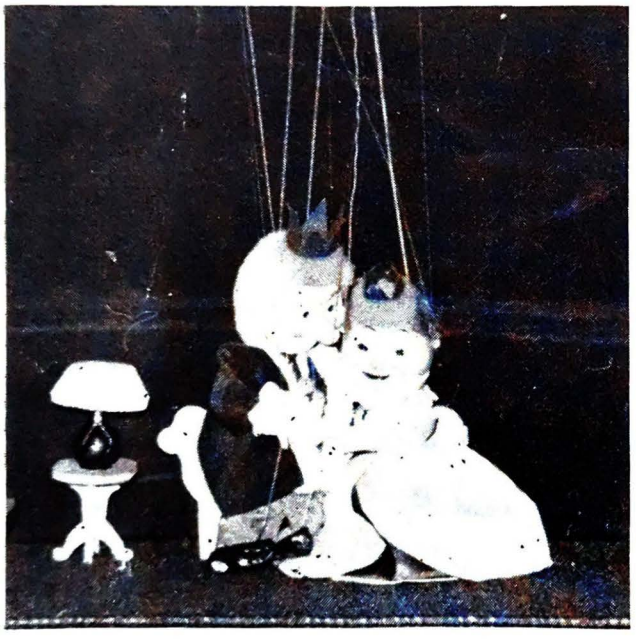
SUSY LEWIS-BARNED, Greystones, Long Hanborough, Oxon., a girl aged 12, preferably going to boarding school, in England, hobbies rabbits, music, horses.

CHRISTINA O'BRIEN, Ryndle Court Hotel, 47 Northstead Manor Drive, Scarborough—from anywhere in the World, speaking and writing English aged 11-12, hobbies animals, stamps, magic, puppets and coins. Christina would also like to contact other Pelpups in her area.

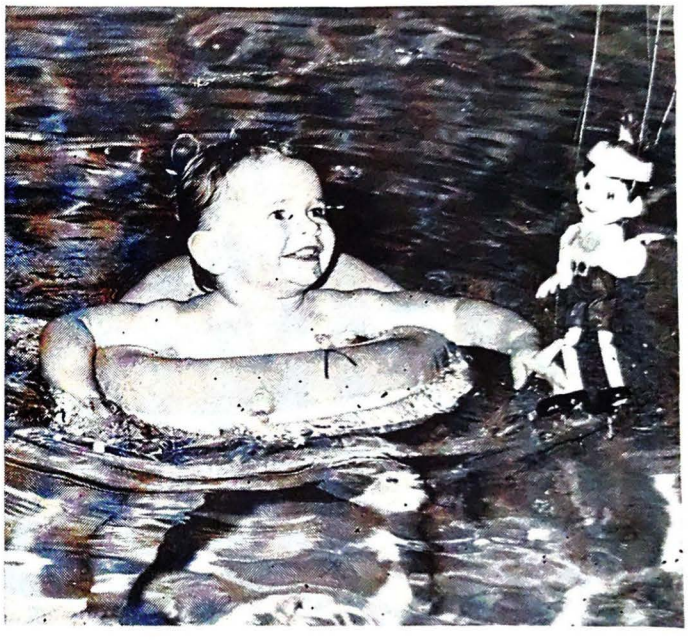
ANN DOGGRELL

SIMON GRIGG

PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION



CHERYL EBERWEIN



CHRISTOPHER MALONEY
(*not in Competition*)

Chris Maloney is the swimming instructor at Gloucester City Baths, but he is an instructor with a difference. He teaches his children to swim aided by a puppet. See the gleeful excitement on the face of that little child while Pinocchio looks quietly satisfied that he will never sink, provided Chris holds on to his strings.

Once a swimmer, the older and slightly bigger pupil is taken through lessons in survival and life saving. "All children must learn to swim in their clothes" is one sensible maxim,—"if they fall in they are bound to be wearing something". So in they jump in dresses, pyjamas, jumpers and trousers.

Wells KPL Swindon Press, Swindon, Wilts.